

NASA Imagery Helps Conservationists Save Tocharian Tigers

Monitoring land cover change in national parks can be an expensive activity - often too much so in the developing world. The Conservation Alliance has adapted tools that make this critical effort more feasible throughout the world by using satellite imagery provided through the NASA REASoN program's DataDump project.

Land cover change is determined by comparing images acquired over time. These detailed 'photographs' of the planet surface are processed for location and vegetation characteristics by the folks at DataDump. The conservationists at CA then engage the image products in conservation assessment models that originate at the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

While CA is supported primarily through US AID, they have found that access to the NASA imagery is critical to their efforts. By using imagery mostly from NASA's Landsat satellite they have helped the Tocharian National Park Service to identify over 10,000 hectares of illegal logging activities, areas that were formerly prime tiger habitat. These same conservation models also project areas where future logging is likely, helping the Tocharians to ensure that no more tiger habitat is lost. CA plans to expand this use of NASA imagery for conservation modeling to help preserve more protected areas throughout Tocharia.



Landsat image of Burspil Tiger Park

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Date Submitted: 05/2005

Relevant Agencies: NASA, USAID, USFWS

Data from sensor(s): ETM+

This research project is funded through the NASA REASoN Program www.nasa.gov